

IN THE CLAIMS

Pursuant to 37 CFR §1.121(c), the following listing, including the text of the claims in the amendment document will serve to replace all prior versions of the claims in the application, and incorporates the amendments made by this Paper.

Claims 48-62 have been canceled without prejudice. Please amend claims 33 and 37-39 as follows:

Claims 1 - 31. (Canceled)

32. (Previously Presented) A method for processing and separating flexible, flat objects during product feed, comprised of:

continuously feeding flexible objects to a transfer module in an essentially regular imbricate formation as the flexible objects fluently advance along a guide within said transfer module with leading lower edges of the flexible objects supported on a surface of the guide and with a trailing edge of each flexible object lying over the leading lower edge of a subsequent flexible object;

erecting the flexible objects during said product feed along the guide into obliquely standing positions with leading upper edges of the flexible objects exhibiting inclinations opposite to orientations of the flexible objects when initially fed along the guide; and

12 accommodating separation of the flexible objects from the obliquely
13 standing positions with leading upper edges of the flexible objects exhibiting
14 inclinations opposite to orientations of the flexible objects when erecting the flexible
15 objects during said product feed along the guide, in a defined number from the flexible
16 objects remaining supported by the guide;

17 conveying the flexible objects away from the transfer module using a gripper to
18 select a single flexible object or a predetermined number of flexible objects,

19 wherein the erecting step is performed by first accelerating the speed of
20 the flexible objects through the guide and then decelerating the speed of the
21 flexible objects further along the guide.

1 33. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 32, comprised of the
2 flexible objects, during said advance of the flexible objects over the surface of the
3 guide, being continuously rotated ~~[[from]]~~ to the orientations of the flexible objects in
4 said obliquely standing position and inclined in an opposite orientation when initially
5 fed along the guide path.

1 34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the
2 flexible objects are folded sheets, whereby a fold of each folded sheet lies in a trailing
3 manner over a respective subsequent folded sheet and the folded sheets obliquely
4 standing at said conveyance away from the guide stand on cut-edge sides.

1 35. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 33, wherein the
2 flexible objects are folded sheets, wherein the fold of each folded sheet in a trailing
3 manner lies over the respective subsequent folded sheet and the folded sheets which
4 stand obliquely on separation from the guide stand on corresponding cut-edge sides of
5 the folded sheets.

1 36. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the
2 erecting of the flexible objects is effected by active braking or acceleration of the
3 flexible objects along at least one edge by independently driving each of a plurality of
4 conveying elements disposed upon the guide.

1 37. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 32, comprised of
2 contributing to said erecting of said flexible ~~object-rotation~~ objects by sequentially
3 urging upper edges of the flexible objects in a direction of said advance.

1 38. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 32, comprised of
2 contributing to said erecting of said flexible ~~object-rotation~~ objects by individually
3 regulating movement of a plurality of conveyors disposed along said guide to movingly
4 engage the lower edges.

1 39. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 32, comprised of
2 contributing to said erecting of said flexible ~~object-rotation~~ objects by terminating said
3 guide with an abutment oriented outwardly from said guide in a direction of said
4 advance.

1 Claims 40-62. (Canceled)